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C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 000533

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS PRESIDENT MESIC CONCERNING REFIT OF LIBYAN SHIP

REF: A. (A) STATE 67335

[1](#)B. (B) STATE 68238

CLASSIFIED BY: NICHOLAS M. HILL, POLECON COUNSELOR, FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) ON MARCH 27, THE AMBASSADOR PASSED TO PRESIDENT MESIC REFTTEL A POINTS CONCERNING REFIT OF THE LIBYAN VESSEL, "AL-MUNIJD," AND DCM FOLLOWED UP WITH MFA OFFICIALS ON MARCH

[1](#)29. THE AMBASSADOR TOLD MESIC THAT THE U.S. HAD DECIDED NOT TO OBJECT TO THE REFIT OF THE "AL-MUNIJD" PROVIDED THE REFIT DID NOT INVOLVE ANY LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT. THE DECISION DID NOT APPLY IN BLANKET FASHION TO OTHER LIBYAN VESSELS THE CROATIANS CONTEMPLATED REFITTING OR CONSTRUCTING. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT LIBYA HAD MADE DRAMATIC PROGRESS IN FULFILLING ITS NONPROLIFERATION COMMITMENTS, BUT EMPHASIZED THAT U.S. SANCTIONS WERE STILL IN PLACE.

[1](#)2. (C) MESIC WAS CLEARLY PLEASED WITH THE DECISION. IT WOULD BE WELCOME NEWS FOR THE FINANCIALLY-STRAPPED RIJEKA SHIPYARD SLATED TO GET THE CONTRACT. MESIC ASKED IF HE COULD ANNOUNCE THE DECISION TO THE PRESS. THE AMBASSADOR ASKED HIM TO WITHHOLD THE INFORMATION UNTIL THE U.S. HAD INFORMED OTHER CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS OF THE DECISION.

[1](#)3. (C) FOLLOWING UP, THE DCM TALKED TO ASSISTANT FOREIGN MINISTER MARGETA AND CHIEF FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT MESIC, IVICA MASTRUKO, ON MARCH 29 REGARDING THE DECISION. THE DCM TOLD MASTRUKO THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS WERE BEING INFORMED AND THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT OBJECT TO AN APPROPRIATE ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING THE "AL-MUNIJD." AT THE MFA, DCM STRESSED THAT THE U.S. DECISION APPLIED ONLY TO THE WORKED ON THE AL-MUNIJD." AT THE MOD, DAO ON MARCH 29 INFORMED COLONEL ZELJKO CEPANAC, ACTING ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR POLICY. ALL WERE PLEASED WITH THE DECISION AND HOPEFUL THAT IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH LIBYA WOULD CONTINUE. FRANK

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